



Mayor
William F. Scanlon, Jr.

Executive Secretary
Martha A. Lewis

*Office of the Mayor
City of Beverly*

191 Cabot Street

Beverly, Massachusetts 01915

Telephone
(978) 921-6000

Facsimile
(978) 922-0285

mayor@beverlyma.gov

September 11, 2013

To the Citizens of Beverly:

During most of the last two decades while I have been privileged to be your mayor, we have worked together to make our city better and done so with real success. Much is improved, including our schools, parks, protection against flooding and financial stability.

Yet, there are still things we ought to do but we do not have the resources to accomplish. More than a decade ago a concept to upgrade the Brimbal Avenue/Route 128 Intersection was first advanced. Such a project would serve to improve vehicular safety while saving time and fuel currently wasted by motorists sitting in lines of traffic.

As a civil engineer by training, this project appealed to me and in my opinion appeared to be a project that would help many people. As a result, I have devoted a lot of time and effort to make these improvements become a reality.

I hope that after nearly 18 years of service you understand that I am motivated by what I believe is best for Beverly. Just that – nothing more or less.

With grant funding that former Senator Berry helped us to secure, we have studied this project and its ramifications since 2005. Last year, with the receipt of a MassWorks Grant, we developed, in collaboration with the Mass. Department of Transportation (MassDOT), an agreed roadway design for Phase 1 of what would be a two-phased project. The State's Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs recently granted us permission to proceed with the first phase which would be financed entirely with State grant funds for which we are now applying. During the course of this process it became clear that significant job creation and new revenues amounting to millions of dollars annually for the City of Beverly could be a direct consequence of the roadway improvements. These revenues would be used to pave our streets, to construct new public safety and public service facilities and accomplish other goals that would improve Beverly's livability. Let's examine the situation including the current and proposed roadway configuration and the parcel that would be developed.

The State of Massachusetts is very close to awarding the City of Beverly some \$5,000,000 to make significant roadway improvements to the Brimbal Avenue/Route 128 Interchange. Today, the interchange is substandard and unsafe. All left turns in the current configuration received an "F" Level of Service rating. Traffic problems are real. It can take several minutes or longer to drive through the area.

CEA Group currently owns a 6.5 acre parcel of land in the area appropriately zoned to allow them to develop a \$20,000,000 project which they have proposed. But in order for the most effective and efficient traffic improvements to be made, a transfer of land between the State and CEA Group is required.

The proposal on the table calls for moving the present connector road between Sohier and Brimbal, on a parallel course, some 400' farther from Route 128. The land on which the new connector road would be located is currently owned by CEA Group. The State would transfer to CEA Group a parcel which includes the current connector and in turn CEA Group would transfer land to the State on which to locate the new connector. The current CEA parcel is zoned as IR(Industrial Restricted) Overlay. The state-owned parcel is zoned as IR (Industrial Restricted.) So that all of CEA's parcel, after the land transfer, would be zoned IR Overlay, a zoning change from IR to IR Overlay is needed for the state-owned parcel. Those land transfers and that zoning change would allow the Phase 1 project to proceed utilizing \$5,000,000 from the State for roadway improvements.

Absent the land transfer, there are no roadway improvements and no \$5,000,000 grant. If there is no land transfer, CEA Group has stated that it will still seek to develop its current appropriately zoned parcel.

Let's look at the traffic implications of the project.

Multiple analyses of anticipated traffic patterns and volume following the construction of CEA's development, by a private engineering firm, indicate that in the a.m. at peak hour Brimbal Avenue would see an increase of 8 vehicle trips per hour. More importantly, in the p.m. at peak, Brimbal Avenue would be expected to see an increase of 30 vehicle trips per hour (or one every two minutes).

However, the engineering analyses also show that the roundabouts would improve the service level from the present "F" to "A" in most cases. "A" service level is the highest MassDOT rating. In other words, traffic would be able to travel through the area much more safely, quickly and efficiently than it does today.

While traffic in the immediate area after completion of Phase One will definitely increase, those people who arrive by Route 128 North or South will likely leave the same way and they will not drive by anyone's home on Brimbal Avenue either coming or going to the CEA Group's proposed development. There will be some modest traffic increase on Brimbal Avenue as discussed earlier but it will be mitigated by the improved service levels.

There were concerns recently expressed regarding the number of proposed traffic signals on Brimbal Avenue. Phase One will introduce two signals. One at Herrick Street Extension which is currently an unsafe location and needs a traffic light in any event. The other traffic light would be located near the Vittori Rocci Post and would allow access to the CEA Group's proposed development. This latter signal would be the responsibility of the developer.

It is worth noting that Phase Two would actually lessen the traffic on Brimbal Avenue. As the sketch shows Phase Two creates a new off ramp northbound near the entrance to the existing

service area on Route 128. The addition of that ramp means that a great many cars would not exit at Sohier Road but rather stay on the highway until they reach the new ramp and never travel on either Brimbal Avenue or Dunham Road.

A second key feature of Phase Two is the option afforded vehicles coming from the Montserrat area wishing to travel on Route 128 north or south. They would be able to bear right onto Otis Road and access 128 without encountering any additional traffic signals beyond that point.

This is becoming too long so I will end it shortly. If you have a question or comment about this project, please call me at 978-921-8398. I would like to talk with you.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Bill Scanlon". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Mayor Bill Scanlon